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TO
GOVERNOR STRONG,

OF THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS,

On the Persecution of the Protestants in France, and on the Proceedings of the English "PROTESTANT SOCIETY," relative to that Subject.

SIR,—When you were extolling the enemies of the French Revolution as "THE BULWARK OF RELIGION," you did not, I dare say, expect to see events so completely prove your folly; and, there can be little doubt, that you would now very gladly find, that your saying, above quoted, were for ever forgotten. But, though no desire existed to visit *you* with justice, in this case, justice to the cause of truth demands, that the extreme folly of your conduct be kept, for awhile, at least, before the eyes of the people of America as well as of those of England.

The French Revolution manifestly tended to the destruction of religious persecution. As it proceeded, we shall see by and by, it realized, in this respect, the expectations of its friends. Amidst all its errors and all its horrors, there was this to console the friends of humanity, that it obviously tended to annihilate, for ever, all persecutions on account of religion, which persecutions had, for so many ages, been the cause of innumerable miseries to France and to Europe. When, therefore, the National Assemblies had, by repeated acts, secured to *all* men perfect liberty in religious matters, it was not without utter astonishment, that the friends of that liberty saw amongst the most clamorous advocate for war against these assemblies, the Dissenters and other Protestant Bodies of these kingdoms.

For ages; for many, many ages, the charge of persecution had been made against the Royal Government of France, the King of which was, by all the Protestant expositors, denominated one of the *ten horns of the beast*; which beast was, according to their account, the POPE.

Now, if the Protestants were *sincere* in this, to what shall we attribute their malice, their zealous hostility, their implacable desire of mischief towards those, who had knocked off one of the *horns*, and who, afterwards, pulled down the Beast himself? To what shall we attribute their abuse, their execrations, on the head of those, who had, by their arms, done more, in six years, to accomplish the destruction of the "Scarlet whore," than they themselves, by their praying and preaching, had been able to accomplish in six centuries?

But, if this conduct, on the part of Protestant bodies and Protestant teachers, was calculated to excite the astonishment of the world, where shall I find words to express the indignation due to their conduct, when, *after* the restoration of the Pope and of Ferdinand; *after* they had seen the first fall of Napoleon produce the resurrection of the Jesuits and the Inquisition; *after* they had seen the Protestants persecuted in Spain and Italy, in consequence, and solely in consequence of Napoleon's fall; when, *after* all this; *after* these *proofs* of the change being so fatal to religious freedom, they, and you and your New England Presbyterian teachers amongst the rest, were found to be the *forwardest* to cry out against Napoleon's return from Elba, and to put up prayers for the success of that combination against him, which, in destroying him, must necessarily confirm all the religious tyrannies which had been revived during his exile?

The arms of this combination, aided by the riches of England, succeeded; Napoleon was again put down, and, in the words of the English "*Protestant Society for the protection of Religious Liberty*," we will now take a look at some of the effects of that success.

I have, upon a former occasion, given an account, from the French papers, of the cruelties committed on the Protestants at Nismes by the "*Royal and Christian army*." But, we now have a description of those cruelties by *authority*. Let me

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therefore, lay this description before you; and then beg your attention to a few remarks which I mean to offer thereon.

"FRENCH PROTESTANTS. — At a Special General Meeting of the PROTESTANT SOCIETY for the PROTECTION of RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, convened at the New London Tavern, Cheapside, London, on November 21, 1815.—To consider the Situation of the persecuted Protestants of France," SAMUEL MILLS, Esq. in the Chair.—It was resolved,—1. That this Committee, who include several Members of the National Church, and who represent many hundred Congregations of Protestant Dissenters—and of Friends to Religious liberty of all denominations, throughout England and Wales, have been taught by their forefathers—and ever will continue, to regard the right of every man, in every age, and in every country, to worship God according to his conscience, as an inviolable—sacred—unalienable right—which no individuals—or governments—or legislatures can, without injustice and oppression, directly or indirectly, infringe.—2. That although this Committee be principally appointed to protect the Religious Freedom of their fellow countrymen, in their native land—yet they should be undeserving of the name of Britons—of Protestants—of Christians—and even of men, if their philanthropy was not extensive as the world—if they did not sympathize with all who suffer for conscience sake—if they did not regard religious persecution, by any sect, with alarm and abhorrence—and if they did not endeavour to effect its extinction, by the exertion of every energy which they possess.—3. That at this period—when instruction is so extensively diffused—when liberal principles are so generally professed—when the most solemn treaties and the most powerful Monarchs have recognised the rights of conscience—and when nations of every Christian denomination have united in resistance to oppression and for the restoration of permanent peace and prosperity to Europe and to the world—this Committee did hope that perfect Religious Liberty would have been regarded as an hallowed plant—and that all nations would have participated the beneficial fruit, which that liberty must produce.—4. That, even if this Committee could have apprehended that persecution would revive, they could not have expected that revival of a persecution of Protestants,

"under Princes—whose obvious interests demanded conciliation—whose predecessors had devastated their own countries by former persecutions—some of whose charters had declared, 'that all religions should be protected by the law, and that all men of all religious professions should be eligible to the office of state'—and whose restoration and continued authority had been chiefly effected and upheld by Protestant liberality, Protestant perseverance, Protestant valour, and Protestant support. 5. That the Committee have therefore learnt, with astonishment and deep regret, that at Nismes, and other places in the South of France, a systematic and cruel persecution of Protestants has existed, since the restoration of the present Monarch to the Throne of that country—that their property has been seized or destroyed—that many persons interesting for their youth and sex, or respectable for their industry, their loyalty, their virtue, and their piety, have been assassinated—that an aged, venerable, and excellent Minister of Religion has been put to death—and that the enormities which superstition, interest, and cruelty have effected in former ages, have there been re-performed—and that they have learnt, with augmented sorrow, that these barbarities yet continue to be perpetrated, as they have not been suppressed with that promptitude and firmness which wisdom, gratitude, benevolence, and christianity indispensibly require. 6. That against deeds, so full of horror, this Committee must publicly protest; and that they assure the unhappy surviving sufferers, by such conduct, that they commiserate their destiny—and that, if such assistance should be unfortunately necessary, they will endeavour, in this country, to provide for them an asylum—to mitigate their sorrows—and to supply relief.—7. That although the Committee are not insensible to the principles which, under ordinary circumstances, might restrain the Government of this country from direct interference, on this subject, with the Government of France;—yet they cannot forget that in former and even in less enlightened times such interposition has repeatedly and usefully occurred, under our best Princes and our ablest Statesmen—that such persecutions are inconsistent with general peace, and violate those universal rights which all nations are bound to protect—and that the Government of England now possess claims to attention and re-

"spect which no former period could present;—and that this Committee, who know the liberal principles of their own Government, and who have repeatedly experienced their attention and their aid, will humbly but earnestly entreat them to remonstrate against the evils which they announce—and to exert their influence to prevent the continuance of a system which they cannot but deprecate and abhor—

"8. That these Resolutions be respectfully communicated, by the Secretaries, to the principal Members of Administration, and that they be inserted in the Daily Papers and Periodical Publications, and be circulated throughout Europe, as future circumstances may require.—9. That this Committee cannot separate without expressing their thanks to their worthy Secretary John Wilks, Esq. for their benevolence and zeal which he has continued to manifest in convening this Meeting, and for preparing and proposing the Resolutions, which they have unanimously adopted.

"SAMUEL MILLS, Chairman.

"10. That this Committee renew their acknowledgements to the Chairman for his attention and ability; and for that cordial attachment to the great cause of Religious Freedom which he has constantly displayed.

"THOMAS PELLATT, } Secretaries.
"JOHN WILKS, }

"To whom communications, or any authentic intelligence on this subject, may be addressed at the New London Tavern, Cheapside, London."

So, Sir; this society hold, from their forefathers, the principle, that "it is the right of every man, in every age and in every country, to worship God according to his conscience, and that this right is inviolable, sacred, and unalienable, which no individual, government, or legislature, can, without injustice and oppression, directly or indirectly, infringe." These are very fine, high-sounding words. They echo very charmingly through the rooms of the New London Tavern. But, pray, Mr. MILLS, where has the sentiment, where has the principle, slept, while you were hollowing and cheering on the war against the pullers down of the Pope, the Monks, and the Inquisition, and while you were regarding in silence, at least, the prosecution and severe pu-

nishment of the publishers of Paine's works, and the author of *Ecce Homo*, who is now in the second year of his imprisonment in a felon's jail, and who, notwithstanding the precept of the Gospel, has never, I believe, been "visited" by any of you; at least, not in the character of "protectors of religious liberty?" It remains for you to show, why you have neglected an object so near to you, so capable of being consoled and aided by you, while you are making such an ostentatious display of your horror at the persecutions now taking place in France, where the objects are so distant from you, and with regard to whom your power of relieving or consoling manifestly amounts to little or nothing. True philanthropy seizes hold on the first suffering object it meets with. It is the false kind, which, in eagerly looking to Africa or other foreign countries for objects of its exertion, stumbles over, and assists to trample under foot, such as are perfectly within its reach. If it be true, that every man, in every age, and every country, has a sacred right to worship God according to his conscience, how has the author of *Ecce Homo* forfeited that right? And, why have you, for so long a time, wholly neglected him?

But, how came it to pass, that you so completely overlooked the revival of the hellish Inquisition? You saw this take place the moment Napoleon was exiled to Elba. You saw numbers put to death on the charge of entertaining "liberal opinions," and yet you were silent. You saw some of those who had escaped into an English fortress surrendered into the hands of their pursuers, and you said not a word. You well knew that it was the fall of Napoleon which had produced these horrid persecutions; and yet, oh! ye "protectors of religious liberty," you were amongst the most loud in your cries for the success of that combination, which was wholly to destroy him, and with him the very hope of religious liberty. Now, forsooth, you talk of *extinguishing* religious persecution by every energy in your power! Contemptible professions! You have, in this case, no more power than so many mice. You have lent your aid to the war against the free governments of France; you have assisted in the restoration of the Bourbons, under whose government France was, for ages, drenched with Protestant blood, and now you affect

to whine and cry over those acts which a Bourbon government has produced.

Now, Mr. STRONG, turning to your American coadjutors, parson *Parish*, and others of that description, what have they to say for themselves, when they are reminded of their rejoicings and processions, their preachings, and their thanksgivings, upon the entrance of the Cossacks into Paris? Let them not now abuse the *Roman Catholics*. Let them not revive their old cant. They put up thanksgiving for the restoration of the Bourbons, and they well knew, that that would be followed by all the consequences of a Bourbon Government.

But, *after* your faction, which calls itself *Federalist*, had actually *seen* the Pope, the Monks, the Inquisition, all restored by those who had exiled Napoleon to Elba; *after* this your faction, seeing him returned to France, again bellowed and prayed for the success of the combination against him. This has been clearly proved by the oration of Mr. LEMUEL SHAW, in commemoration of your independence, and delivered on the 4th of July last. Mr. SHAW, at a moment when the issue was unknown to you, exclaims: "GOD speed the cause of the ALLIES, of justice, of liberty, and peace!"

Vile hypocrisy! Base party spirit! The talents displayed in Mr. Shaw's oration, shew that he is a man of too much sense to have expected, that justice, liberty, and peace would be promoted by the success which he prayed for. At any rate, has that success given liberty and peace to any nation? Has it produced what Mr. Shaw calls justice? If this be the stuff that your Federal faction is composed of, it must be the wish of every friend of justice and freedom to see that faction destroyed root and branch.

Let it be remarked again, Sir, that it was *after* you had *actually seen* the Jesuits restored and the infernal Inquisition rekindle its flames; that it was *after* these effects of Napoleon's loss of power had become visible, that Mr. Shaw, the apparent organ of your faction in Massachusetts, prayed to God, in a public assembly, that Napoleon might be, at once, *crushed again and for ever*.

Mr. Shaw, however, was not singular; for, in a sermon preached before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, on the 18th of May last, the

preacher stated, that "on the memorable day of Waterloo the *Commander of the Hosts of Heaven* had descended to take the command on earth, and that it was under his immediate direction and controul that the great Duke had so gloriously terminated the conflict!"

Why, then, affect to commiserate the sufferings of the Protestants in France? Are not those sufferings amongst the natural consequences of the success of the coalition? Is it not notorious that, under Napoleon, the Protestants suffered neither pains nor indignities? That they were *really* protected; and that, instead of the silly and unavailing "*resolutions*" of the Protestant Society for the *Protection* of "Religious Liberty," they had the solid and sure guarantee of the Code Napoleon? If it was true, that "the Commander of the Hosts of Heaven" fought in person against Napoleon, why complain now at the fate of the Protestants of France, who suffer, who notoriously suffer, in consequence of Napoleon's overthrow?

This *Protection* Society say, that the coalesced powers were "*united in resistance to oppression*;" that is to say, to make war upon, and to destroy, Napoleon was to *resist oppression*. But, what say the French Protestants themselves, in their defence, lately translated and published in England by the Rev. J. COBBIN? They have these remarkable words: "Calmer times succeeded. Fattigued by so many convulsions, Language appeared to breathe again. Nismes, in particular, knew no re-action, and was placed without difficulty under the empire of a regular government. During 17 years, from 1796 to 1812, all party-spirit appeared to be annihilated; the most perfect order prevailed, the two religions existed together without rivalry, and even with friendship. In society and in business, men, professing different doctrines, were united and associated together without questioning each other's faith; every one appeared to have profited by the improvements of the age and to have forgotten former quarrels; peace and happiness were sought after from all quarters and found at Nismes."

This is their own description of their state under the National Assemblies and Napoleon. And yet, you Sir, called the

enemies of these Assemblies and of Napoleon, the "*Bulwark of Religion!*" Does not your cheek redden with shame as you read? As to the cheek of Mr. Shaw, that is not susceptible of blushing; for he, even after he had seen that religious persecution had arisen on the first fall of Napoleon, called upon "*God*" to "*speed the cause of the ALLIES, of justice, of liberty, and of peace;*" though it was well known to every man who heard him, that Napoleon was the chosen ruler of France, and that he had used all his efforts to maintain the peace of Europe undisturbed.

But, to say the truth, these French Protestants, if truly exhibited in their published defence above quoted from, deserve what they now suffer; for they have been guilty of the basest ingratitude, they say that they *rejoiced at the restoration of the Bourbons*; that they *wept with joy* at that event; that all their churches *resounded with prayers* for the king. In "*a few days,*" however, "*spent in joy at so un-hoped-for a deliverance,*" they heard "*with surprise,*" what was so new to them, the words *Catholic* and *Protestant* "*used in a hostile sense.*" Soon after their blood began to flow.

Never was cause more closely followed by effect. The proclamation of the King, announcing his restoration and the fall of Napoleon, was scarcely read in their country, when they found the knife at their throat, after 17 years of harmony and happiness under Napoleon and the Jacobins. What impudence, then, must that man have who affects to believe, that the Bourbons and their friends, that the enemies of Napoleon, were the "*bulwark of religion!*" This was the effect, the immediate effect, of the restoration of the Bourbons. *We*, the Jacobins, said that it would be so; nor would it be very surprising if we were to rejoice at the fulfilment of our predictions. But, what a shame, what everlasting shame, to those who have been labouring, and even spending their fortunes for the restoration of that very family, under which the Protestants were *always* persecuted.

This subject, Sir, begins to make a stir in England. *Cant* is at work; but, for this once, even hypocrisy will expose itself, it being impossible to make an outcry against the murder and pillage of the

Protestants in France, without the parties exposing themselves, like your priests, to the *retort*, that *they* have laboured to produce that which they now affect to lament. Hear a precious hypocrite, in the editor of our Courier newspaper, who, though that is going very far, is, I verily believe, almost as base and as bloody as any federal priest in your country.

"We had the *grief* to announce yesterday the assassination of Gen. de la Garde, by a *bigotted mob* at Nismes. He was assassinated in the act of executing the Duke of Angouleme's orders to re-open and protect the Protestant Churches. The intolerance, persecution, and cruelty of these mobs are horrible and ought to be repressed with the utmost severity. It was natural that they should excite in this *land of freedom, of toleration, and of justice*, the deepest interest and indignation. The papers inform us that '*Resolutions have been published in Wales. On Tuesday two meetings were held in the metropolis. One meeting of the Dissenting Ministers of all denominations in London and the vicinity, and the other of 'The Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty,' which represents all the Dissenters and most of the Methodists in England and Wales. General meetings are also contemplated in various populous districts, and a general subscription for the relief of the persecuted has been proposed.*'—But let us put in a claim for the Ministers and Members of the *Established Church*, that they are quite disposed to view with as much abhorrence any persecution for religious opinions, as any of those that dissent from them. But let it be ascertained whether the charges against the French Government of *stimulating these diabolical practices* are true or false—whether they did or did not set the Catholics against the Protestants—whether the persecution was instigated by *political or religious differences*—and do not let persons make their zeal and detestation against the Catholic persecutors in France the means of gratifying their own political prejudices or ill will against the government of England! Do not let them attempt to circulate a charge, which they know cannot be true, against his Majesty's Ministers as if they could in any manner have pro-

"moted, or be in any way responsible, for these horrible events."

Oh! no! Let not the government of England, that holy protestant government, be made responsible! This is curious trash! In "this land of freedom, toleration, and justice," the author of *Ecce Homo* is shut up in a felon's jail for two years. The ministers have met in *Wales*, have they? They are meeting in the metropolis, are they? The Methodists are coming forth too, it seems? And the *Church* is disposed to move? They had better, I believe, meet to see how they shall be able to pay the taxes. They had better first, at any rate, petition in favour of the author of *Ecce Homo*; or, answer the book, for the writing of which he has been so severely punished. It may be a bad book; it may be false; it may be calculated to do mischief; but, let it be answered, then; or let these meeting people apply for the release of the author. Unless they do this, to begin with, I shall look upon all their proceedings as cant.

ROWLAND HILL will meet, too, I suppose? But Rowland worked hard for the Bourbon restoration. Rowland said that he verily believed that Napoleon was instigated by the Devil. I asked Rowland (loud Rowland) at the time, whether he verily believed, that it was the Devil who instigated Napoleon to put down the Pope and the Inquisition? What will this man of mighty lungs say now, when he is told by the French Protestants themselves, that they enjoyed peace and happiness under the Jacobins and Napoleon, and that the very moment Napoleon was put down, their throats began to be cut?

To this letter, Sir, I subjoin the petition of the Protestants of Nismes to *Louis le Desiré*. Fulsome, false, base wretches. They call his entrance into Paris "*glorious*." Degraded dogs! They call it glorious to see their country in the hands of foreigners, laid under tribute, stripped of its defences, and subjected, for five years, to foreign bayonets. They hoisted the *white flag* with joy. Did they so. Why then, let them take the consequences. They rejoiced, did they at the return of those Bourbons, by whose family their fathers had been butchered; and they rejoiced in the fall of him, who had been so long their *real protector*. Let them take their reward.

There is to be a *subscription*, it seems. Come, now, Johnny Bull, let us see how much you will give to these persecuted Protestants. I'll bet you a pound note, John, that you do not raise for them so much in a *year*, as was raised for the emigrant priests in *one day*. Now is the time to take you, John, upon both hips. You are in a sort of qualmish state. You are bothered. You will very soon expose yourself, if you do not look very sharply about you. This is no very soothing language, to be sure. But, it is no time for flattery; and, if it were, you should not have it at my hands.

And now, Mr. Strong, wishing you joy with the success of your "*Bulwark of Religion*," I, for the present, leave you to the invention of some other canting phrase to be played off at the next Fast Day that Parson Parish may advise you to proclaim.

WM. COBBETT.

Bolton, 24th Nov. 1815:

PETITION ADDRESSED TO LOUIS XVIII.
BY THE PRINCIPAL PROTESTANTS OF
NISMES.

Paris, July 30, 1815.

SIRE,—We lay our acute miseries at the foot of your throne: in *your* name, in the name of the *most clement* of princes, our fellow-citizens are *plundered* and *assassinated*. A misled body of peasantry, in supposed obedience to *your* orders, have assembled at the command of a Commissioner invested with powers from *your* august Nephew:—although ready to attack us, we received them with words of peace.—The example of the capital could not fail to be followed by the chief city of the department of Gard. A convention, *on parole of honour*, was agreed upon between the Deputies of the Municipal Council of Nismes, and the Sieur René de Bernis, your Commissioner, and Field-Marshal Barré, commanding in *your* name.—On the 15th we learnt your Majesty's *glorious entrance into Paris*, and the *white flag* was consequently displayed on our edifices; public tranquillity was undisturbed, and ought to have remained so.—When the armed peasantry entered our walls, they *attacked* the garrison, consisting of 150 men, quartered in the barracks; on being summoned to surrender, they capitulated, and delivered up their arms and artillery; but they were assailed on their departure, and *nearly all massacred*. The greater part of our national guard, which had hitherto pre-

served tranquillity, was now disarmed. Strangers paraded the city, and the houses of the principal inhabitants of the Protestant religion were *attacked and plundered*. We subjoin a list of them. The disorder continued during the 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, and 21st, and had not entirely ceased on the 22d. Terror had driven some of the chief inhabitants of our city from their dwellings. It would be deceiving your Majesty to conceal or to endeavour to diminish the horrors which have rendered desert our good city of Nîmes: arrests and proscriptions have taken place, and difference in religious opinions is the only real cause of them. The Protestants, Sire, who are calumniated, are *defenders of the throne*. Your august Nephew has beheld our children *under his banners*—our fortunes have been placed *at his disposal*. To *serve with fidelity, to love your Majesty*, we ask for nothing but peace and protection. Although attacked without motive, the Protestants have not, even by a just resistance, furnished their enemies with a ground for calumny. As interpreters of their sentiments, their devotedness, their fears, and their hopes, we throw ourselves with just confidence at your feet. Save us, Sire; protect your children; extinguish the fatal brands of religious and civil war. A single act of your authority will suffice to restore political existence to a city rendered interesting by its manufactures and population. Demand an account of their conduct from the chiefs who have brought about miseries, which they should have foreseen, and yet have not prevented. We lay before your Majesty an exact detail of the facts, and all the documents which have reached us. The hearts of our unfortunate fellow-citizens are paralyzed, and their complaints stifled by fear. Placed in a more independent situation, we have dared, in a respectful manner, to raise our voices in their behalf; and to shed, in the presence of the *Father of the Country*, bitter tears for our present and our future situation. We are, with *profound respect*, Sire. Your Majesty's, &c. &c.

OFFICIAL PAPERS.

THE MARSHAL PRINCE OF THE MOSKWA
TO THE AMBASSADORS OF THE FOUR
GRAND ALLIED POWERS.

EXCELLENCY,—It is at the last extremity, at the moment in which the critical circumstances to which I see myself reduced, leave me no longer but too feeble means of avoiding the condition and the

terrible danger of an accusation of the crime of high treason, that I resolve to have recourse to a legitimate address to you, of which the object is as follow:—I am sent before the Chamber of Peers by virtue of an Ordinance issued by the King on the 11th instant, and after a speech addressed to that Chamber by his Majesty's Prime Minister. This imposing denunciation, and the considerations upon which it is founded, are of a nature to give me just apprehensions. Among other motives for instituting my process, I have read with astonishment in that speech, "that it was *even in the name of Europe* that the Ministers came to conjure the Chamber, and to require it to try me." Such a declaration, suffer me to observe, is irreconcilable with that which has passed in these last periods of agitation in France. I do not conceive how the august Allies can be made to intervene in this criminal proceeding, since their magnanimity was generously occupied with the care of guaranteeing me against it, and since a formal, sacred, and inviolable convention exists upon this subject. Deign to recollect that by the Treaty of Paris of the 30th May, 1814, the high contracting parties had formed an alliance with his Majesty, Louis the Eighteenth. Being informed at Vienna on the 13th March last, that the cause of legitimacy in France was threatened by the return of Bonaparte, they resolved upon the solemn Pact of that day (13th March) with the Ministers at the Congress of his Most Christian Majesty. In this Pact the Allied Sovereigns declared 'that they were ready to give to the King of France and to the French nation the necessary succours to restore public tranquillity, and to make common cause against those who should undertake to disturb it. In the confirmatory Pact of the 25th of the same month of March, the High Powers engaged solemnly to unite all their force to maintain in all their integrity the *conditions of the Treaty of Paris* against the plans of Bonaparte; *they promise to act in common*. They regulate the respective contingents *they proposed to march against the common enemy*. In fine, his Most Christian Majesty was *invited to give his assent to the said measures*, in case he should stand in need of the *auxiliary troops* that were promised him, &c. It results clearly from these different stipulations that all the armies of Europe

without distinction, have been the auxiliaries of the King of France, that they have fought in his direct interest for the submission of all his subjects. Victory soon decided in favour of the English and Prussian arms united on the plains of Waterloo, and brought them under the walls of Paris. There remained, to oppose their ulterior progress, a corps of the French army, which might have sold their lives dearly. A negotiation took place, and on the 3d of July a convention between the two parties was signed. The 12th Article of which says:—"Shall be equally respected, persons and private property; the inhabitants, and in general all the individuals who are in the capital, shall continue to enjoy their rights and liberty, without being disturbed or sought after for any thing relating to the functions they occupy or shall have occupied, *their conduct and their political opinions.*"—The convention has been since ratified by each of the Allied Sovereigns as being the work of the two Powers the first delegated *de facto*. It has thus acquired all the force which the sacred right of nations, and the rights of nature, and of persons, could impart to it. It is become the unalterable safeguard of all Frenchmen whom the misfortune of the troubles may have exposed even to the legitimate resentment of their Prince.—His most Christian Majesty positively acceded to it himself upon entering into his capital; more than once he has invoked the imposing authority of this political contract as an act indivisible in all its parts.—Hence, Excellency, can it be doubted that I am well founded, as one of the persons for whom this stipulation was made, in claiming the benefit of the 12th Article, and the religious execution of the guarantees expressed in it?—I presume, in consequence, to require expressly from your Ministry and from the august Power in the name of which you exercise it, that you cause an end to be put, with regard to me, to all criminal procedure on account of the functions which I filled in the month of March, 1815, *of my conduct, and of my political opinions.* My state of isolation and abandonment is a reason the more for determining your Excellency to come to my succour, and to enable me to enjoy, by your powerful mediation, the right I have acquired. If I had not blindly relied on the word of so

many Sovereigns, I should, in some unknown land, have made myself forgotten. It is this august and holy word that has caused my security—can it be deceived? I cannot believe so; and I expect with confidence from your loyalty, that you will grant me your powerful intervention.

(Signed)

NEY.

Paris, Nov. 14.

DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S ANSWER TO MARSHAL NEY.

Paris, Nov. 15, 1815.

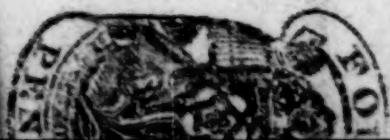
MONSIEUR LE MARECHAL, — I have had the honour of receiving the note which you addressed to me on the 13th instant, relative to the operation of the Capitulation of Paris in your case.—The Capitulation of Paris of the 3d of July last, was made between the Commander in Chief of the Allied and Prussian Armies on the one part, and the Prince D'Eckmuhl, Commander in Chief of the French Army, on the other, and related *exclusively* to the *military occupation of Paris*. The object of the twelfth article was to prevent any measures of severity under the *military authority of those who made it towards any persons in Paris*, on account of any offices they had filled, or any conduct or political opinion of theirs; but it never was intended, and never could be intended, to prevent either the existing French Government, under whose authority the French Commander in Chief must have acted, or any French Government which might succeed to it, from acting in this respect as it might seem fit.—I have the honour to be, Monsieur le Marechal, your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed)

WELLINGTON.

NOTE RELATIVE TO THE CAPITULATION OF PARIS.

It is not wished, nor is it possible, to recal the results and the consequences of the Capitulation of Paris, signed by the Duke of Wellington and Prince Blucher, in the name of the Allies, and producing immediately the re-establishment of the Throne for the King; but the subsequent observations are made on the faith and validity of Capitulations, with reference to Articles 12, 14, and 15, of that of Paris. Capitulations or Conventions concluded by Commanders in Chief, are not



momentary and passing conventions, but are every where recognized as *permanent* engagements. Treaties thus formed by their representatives cannot be arbitrarily changed by *Governments*, particularly to the prejudice of the *security of the property, the liberty, and the life* of the party guaranteed by the original capitulation. Even no possession whatsoever acquired by the Capitulation, can be disposed of without fulfilling the conditions under which the acquisition has been made. A government, in yielding any possession whatever, *cannot disengage itself from the guarantee* of a capitulation; and the obligation *not being discontinued*, the oppressed do not the less preserve the right of claiming its protection against *subsequent* violations of their personal security. Civil or military persons, accused of political offences, covered by a capitulation, cannot be delivered up to be tried, by a *new Government*, nor even by that which is re-established in its rights.

France has consecrated this practice in all civilized nations, and particularly in England, the history of which presents a series of obligatory examples.—The only deviation occurred at Naples, where the capitulation made by Captain Foote was not respected by Lord Nelson, and where the party surrendered on the faith of the English Government, to the re-established Neapolitan Government, was persecuted and *executed by the latter Government*; but Lord Nelson pretended that Captain Foote was not authorised to make a capitulation, and yet that odious transaction has cast a shade over the character of Lord Nelson, and it excited so much horror in England, that nothing but the eminent services of Lord Nelson could have saved him from being the object of an accusation and judicial proceedings in Parliament. Recently, Generals Savary, Lallemant, and several others, were not delivered to the French Government by the English, because the Captain of the Belerophon had pledged his honour, and that not even by a written convention, but by an understood engagement, that all those who embarked under his protection should have their lives secured by the Government.—The King of France cannot pretend that the capitulation is not binding, on the grounds above stated. How can he seek to violate *this single and most solemn* of the articles, when, with regard

to the others which are to the disadvantage of France, he has been compelled to lend himself to their rigorous fulfilment? The capitulation was concluded *in the name of the Allied Powers*, and the King of France, on the day of the capitulation, was only *one member* of the coalition, according to the terms of the Declarations and Proclamations of the Coalesced Powers, and in particular that of *June 22d, signed by the Duke of Wellington*. The friends of justice bring forward these observations the more readily, as the whole *population of Paris, the lives and property* of so many individuals, are protected by no other ægis than the faith of that Capitulation. It is essential to observe that the city of Paris has never been restored to the King; that it is now in the military occupation of the Allies, and that no person can proceed beyond its environs without a passport countersigned by the Military Commandant of the Allies. Art. 12. "Shall be equally respected," &c. (See *Ney's Address to the Ambassadors of the Foreign Powers.*) Art. 14. "The present Convention shall be observed, and serve as a rule for mutual relations, until the conclusion of Peace." Art. 15. If difficulties arise in the execution of any one of the Articles of the present Convention, the interpretation thereof shall be made in favour of the French Army and the City of Paris."

ADDITIONAL NOTE.

The Duke of Wellington in an audience granted yesterday (Nov. 13) to Madame Ney, gave as the grounds for the disposition in which he was personally not to interfere at all in the process of the Marshal. That his Majesty the King of France had not ratified the Convention of the 3d July; that the stipulation written in the 12th Article, expressed only the renunciation of the High Powers, on their own account, of proceeding against any one in France for his conduct or political opinions; that they had nothing then to meddle with the acts of the King's Government.

Madame la Marechale Ney cannot believe that this first opinion, manifested upon the 12th Article of the Convention of the 3d July, can be definitively maintained in the Conference of the Plenipotentiaries. In effect, in the attacks and invasion purely foreign of a conqueror,

the enemy who penetrates into a country busies himself in no wise with the troubles that may have broken out in it, and it does not fall within the order of capitulations, that those of a certain party shall not be proceeded against. It is then because in the present occurrence the war was special, and for the pacification of the interior, that they thought of stipulating it in terms of amnesty. The King, say they, has not ratified it; but the ratification has been sufficient, for the taking of possession followed from it.—The condition of the besieged cannot be changed afterwards, unless things be re-established in *statu quo*. His Highness has not sufficiently considered, what ought to be necessarily considered, that this 12th article was the subject of a discussion between the English and Prussian Commissioners, and the Commissioners of the French Army, and that it was well understood that this stipulation took place on account of the King, and not on account of the Allied Armies, who had no positive interest to act against such or such party.—That the Article is consented to in the name and common interest of all the Allied Powers, an interest indivisible, and which the two Treaties of the 13th and 25th March, designated as being principally that of his Majesty the King of France.—That it will not be meddling in the Acts of the King's Government to recall to his Majesty engagements made in his name, engagements which his Ministers forget; which individuals proceeded against claim, and of which it becomes the dignity of the high Powers that the effect should not be null. Finally, in all cases, since his Highness allows that the high Powers are at least bound themselves by a renunciation, what ought they to think at being made to appear as conjuring and requiring the trial of Marshal Ney? Is it not the first thing they ought to do in such a conjuncture to disengage speedily the balance of criminal justice of this enormous weight?

NOTE—Duplicates of these documents have been sent to the Prince Regent of England, and to the Prime Minister.—Their answer is expected.

EDINBURGH POLITICS—CLERGY, &c.

Edinburgh, Nov. 3, 1815.

MR. CORBETT.—As I had anticipated, in my last letter, the alarm excited among

the supporters of corruption has been considerable by Mr. Cartwright's appearance in this city. Among other attempts to stem the progress of the spirit of Reform, has been an attack upon Mr. Cartwright in one of our scycophant prints. This endeavour to depreciate the political character of that Gentleman, comes from the pen of one of our many unemployed briefless Barristers, who, being in no request in his profession, has bethought himself of doing the dirty work of the men in power. The fawning creature had, by such weak malicious aspersions as the present, been so far successful in effecting his purpose, as to have obtained a paltry situation, from which he drives about 100*l.* a-year of the public money, and he labours in his vocation for advancement. For this he is understood to be *bound* to say every thing that can contribute to the gratification of his patrons; and, as by the answer he has been able to extort from the Major, he has in some degree attained his object, it is another step of promotion; his path to *honours* and emolument is laid open! It is a pity the Major took any notice of him, being utterly worthless, and beneath his regard. This attack serves also another purpose; it is intended for a sort of recommendation of the wretched paper of which he is the hired Editor; as its circulation is very circumscribed, they must try all shifts to extend it.—As to the cause itself, and its progress here, I can offer no very *flattering* prospect of its success.—The most intelligent seem to consider it a hopeless task to petition a House of Commons to reform itself, and would rather depreciate the idea of such a thing being entertained by them, as any thing that could be expected to be done would be far short of having a beneficial tendency. The opinion given by Mr. Paine, in his *Rights of Man*, that such a measure would be totally inefficacious, and, since that, by Sir Francis Burdett, when he compared the rotten boroughs to *Highwaymen's pistols*, seem to have made a deep impression on the most thinking minds.—In regard to the Meeting of the Friends of Reform that was held here, and the Gentlemen that conducted the business, some of them are the known and enlightened supporters of that cause; and although the view of all the parties may be good, yet I fear some of those who take the lead, have involved it with other

matter totally irrevelant and unconnected. I am led to think thus, not from the resolutions and proceedings of the Meeting, which I have not yet seen, but from a prospectus of an intended new weekly publication, said to be by the Gentleman who presided at the Meeting. I hope I shall be able, lest you may not have seen it, to transmit you a Copy; and, if I may presume to anticipate your opinion of it, I think you will not be over sanguine in your expectation of its beneficial tendency. The composition is far from being masterly; the politics of too motly a nature, and interlarded with *religion*. This will not do. To be useful, it must be boldly and well expressed—the political feeling decided and straight-forward; and, if it touch on religion at all, it must only be to expose its abuses, and to lash superstition.—With these qualities, it might prosper.—As it is exhibited in the specimen, it would by an occasional frankness of discussion on national matters, give offence to the leading parties, and, by its half-way politics and common-place religious cant, it would disgust the most estimable part of Society, who dare in the midst of prejudices, to think boldly and originally on whatever comes before them. It would, to a certainty, be put down by one party, and not supported or regretted by the other.

Having in my late communication, respecting the *Politics* of this place, promised to say something of the character of the *Clergy*, and their intermeddling spirit, I beg to convey the result of my observations, after a long acquaintance of them. The two great factions in the country, have each their partisans and adherents in this body, who, like their great leaders, never fail to turn to their own advantage every circumstance, however trifling, that can favour their own interests, or militate against that of their opponents. They are drawn up in hostile battalia on all occasions where their interests clash, and never coalesce but in cringing to the great, voting fulsome addresses, and in enforcing injunctions to keep the multitude in ignorant subjection. The morality of these teachers of super-human maxims, is also of so convenient and pliable a nature as to assume different characters, as the delinquents shall happen to range themselves on their sides; and so nicely have they now arrived at the art of balancing delinquen-

cies among themselves, that the one party shall pass you off one offence against the opposing set, if that other shall agree to hush up a similar one against them. We had lately a case of this kind completely quashed, where a delict of a *particular nature* constituted the charge; but the accused was rescued from the accusers unmerciful fangs, and those of a numerous party, by the ingenuity of a prying friend, who discovered a crime of a deeper dye against the accusing, and, by holding it up *in terrorem*, compelled him to desist from his rancorous pursuit. With all this spirit, however, they are loud in their recommendation of the spirit of forgiveness—reversing the adage, that example is better than precept.

Although, among the grovelling followers of these gentlemen, religion, like the Wellington boots and large French bonnets, has of late become exceedingly *fashionable*, the enthusiastic sticklers for holiness never cease their hypocritical railing against the *infidelity* of the times, and the danger of free thinking, engendered by the revolutions of the world; and are tremblingly alive, ostensibly for the interests of religion, but really to keep the trade in vogue. They here divide themselves again into two parties in *religion*, and although their malignancy towards each other is restrained by a regard to appearances, yet their innuendoes and opposing dogmas have not only made a wide breach between themselves, but they have, in their private coteries, and by their public insinuations, so influenced the mass of their flocks, that many would consider it the utmost impiety to listen to the more polished, moral, intelligible harangues of their antagonists. Should you preach what no man can understand, and enjoin what none can practise, you shall have multitudes to caress you; your church will be crowded. If otherwise, you will have next to empty benches. These men are spoiled by the fervour of their hearers, and they take care it shall never cool. In an article in a recent number of the *Edinburgh Review*, the author had taken occasion to remark, that Mr. Hume's famous essay on miracles was the foundation of all just reasoning on the subject, and, among unbiassed minds, remained the palladium of unfettered judgment. The alarm was taken: our holy faith was attacked! the church was in danger! and

the fry of sermon-makers, and editors of Evangelical Magazines, &c. set to work with their small artillery to combat this fearful assertion. But the profound author of that article, adopting the resolution of the great essayist never to enter the field of controversy, especially with zealots, left them to themselves. They have, of course, fallen into oblivion, or have been only listened to in the narrow circles where their trash finds a favourable reception.

I am led thus far to remark on the conduct of these men, because they use the powerful engine of religion to avert the minds of men from taking a deliberate view of the state of society, by for ever enjoining a neglect of the most important of all duties, that of being an intelligent and active *citizen*, and substituting in its place a set of dogmas calculated to serve their own ends. This they well know serves also the purpose of men in power, and enables them to appeal to the country in times of need, for the preservation of all that is *dear* and *sacred* among mankind. We need but look at those fulsome addresses from the general assembly, at their annual meeting, where they are the first to lead the cry, if liberty is to be put down, and to bend the knee of abject congratulation on the attainment of certain objects. All kings, all princes, are with them the anointed of God, if they support *their privileges* and *their freedom*, and the choicest blessings of Heaven are not only invoked, but prophetically promised to them and their posterity for ever. It would be endless to trace the individual instances of the servility of these men. The unanimity, however, with which they seconded the hyperbolical praises heaped on Lord Wellington, at a late Meeting of the Commission of their Assembly, deserves notice. The bell-wether of the high-flying party had made up his mind to exceed all former extravagance, and stated *literally*, that on the memorable day of Waterloo, the commander of the *Hosts of Heaven* had descended to take the command on earth, and that it was under his immediate direction and controul that the great Duke had so gloriously terminated the conflict! Fearful odds indeed! No wonder Napoleon was discomfited with two to one in numbers against him, and such an ally to boot!!! All chuckled applause, and could more

have been said, their full and grateful hearts had uttered it.

AN OLD FRIEND OF REFORM.

P. S.—Should I trace back the history of these reverend gentlemen a little further, I may come in contact with the Editor of one of the vile prostituted prints of London. Pray is the *Times* man, who is I understand a *priest* also, inclined to the same *delicate refined indulgencies* as his brother of the *Courier*? They have such *similarity* of tastes and sentiments on some leading points, it is possible they may have a sympathy in all! Precious teachers of morality!! Virtuous supporters of venerable institutions!!!

Edinburgh, 5th November 1815.

FRIEND COBBETT,—In this capital of Caledonia, we are a comical collection of beings. Some of us, in the opinion of others, have too much religion; some, too little; and some, none at all. These last seem to entertain the comical fancy, that a universe of exquisite workmanship was made without a maker. But with all our various opinions concerning another world, we are, however, at last shewing a little sound sense, which indeed begins to have the appearance of *common sense*, respecting a point of some consequence in this same world in which we are living; for we have discovered that a free people, without freedom, are in a comical situation. With all due respect, therefore, to the wisdom of those who think that a nation can be represented without representatives, we are actually flocking by hundreds and by thousands, to sign petitions that, in future, *Representation* shall not be a non-entity. And in this men of all religions, and of no religion, are alike agreed; although as they walk together to give their signatures, they pass their jokes and their sarcasms all upon another. As all the world, Sir, know you to be a very ignorant man, I take that to be a sufficient apology for supposing you may not know, that in Scotland the word "*superiority*" signifies one who, without an inch of land, a grain of property, a particle of sense, or a scrap of character, ought by right divine, (now so happily reviving in France) to be his countryman's tyrant, while he himself is a slave; and that "*Town Council*" means a power of disposing of the liberty

and property of the inhabitants without consulting them. If you in England, friend Cobbett, shall act with half the spirit that now prevails in Scotland, certain *honourable* gentlemen will soon be in the comical situation of having no constituents; as thenceforward the word *election* would express *free choice*, and it would be comical indeed if a free people should make *Representatives* of men who know not the meaning of that word! Your's,

ANDREW HUME KNOX.

ON BLASPHEMY.

Glasgow, Nov. 17, 1815.

MR. COBBET,—In your Register of the 21st of October, I observed an Article signed B. in answer to the question, *What is Blasphemy?* Mr. B. gives a new turn to the word *Blasphemy*. The Athanasian Creed teaches us, that a belief in the Incarnation of the second Person of the Glorious Trinity is necessary to salvation. Mr. B. on the contrary, tells us, that "the Incarnation of God is impossible," and that "the doctrine is blasphemous." "The blasphemy of the expression (says he), and the impossibility of the fact, must be exactly the same, whether we affirm the Almighty to be Incarnate, by having been made one of the lowest, or one of the highest of those Creatures, which his own power and goodness have called into existence."—Consequently, to use his own word, a *bovine* Incarnation of the Deity is not less admissible than a human one. He also says that "both *reason* and *revelation* teach us, that the ONLY TRUE GOD is immutable, incorporeal, and omnipresent."—I believe, Mr. Cobbet, that the Unitarians have now an Act of Parliament, allowing them the public profession of their tenets, one of which is the *denial of the Incarnation*. Though I think this indulgence *exceedingly partial*, while other Sectaries are prohibited from the public profession of their tenets, I by no means find fault with any man for his peculiar opinions, if the result of genuine conviction. I am an enemy to PERSECUTION. I abhor it. Though a member of the Church, I am a friend of toleration. Would to God that *all Governments* would punish, not religious opinions, but crimes against Society! Toleration appears to me to

be the *only expedient* for maintaining the Peace of Society. Wide, therefore, may it spread, and long be its duration!—But by what reason or authority does Mr. B. deny the Immaculate Conception, the Incarnation, and the Trinity, and admit other doctrines equally mysterious and incomprehensible? Like you, Sir, I make my stand in the Church, and cannot conceive why a Sectary should startle at one or more of our dogmas, and admit others without any apparent difference as to authority or reason.—*Reason* and *Revelation* (he says) teach us that the only true God is immutable, *incorporeal*, and omnipresent, and consequently that he cannot become incarnate. Now our Church says, that it is on the *Authority of Revelation* that she inculcates the doctrine of the Incarnation. Mr. B. says NO. Who shall decide the difference? Both he and the Church appeal to the Bible.—As to the assertion that *Reason* teaches us that the only true God is *incorporeal*, I think it is only *by faith and the authority of scripture* that we can be fully convinced of the *incorporeal nature or spirituality* of God. Our feeble reason is weak to grasp or comprehend the divine essence. Here reason is baffled and faith triumphs. Our thoughts after their utmost stretch, roll back on darkness!—Every thing in the Universe is systematic; all is connection, adhesion, affinity. Hence we necessarily infer some principle of order, some Moving Agent; but this principle of order, this Moving Agent, this Deity

— "dwells awfully retired

From mortal eye, and Angel's purer ken!"

Reason alone cannot incontrovertibly establish whether the Deity is *corporeal* or *incorporeal*;—but where *Reason* fails, *Faith* triumphs.—*Spirituality* is merely the negative of corporality. Now, what is that which has *no parts*; which has neither length, breadth, nor thickness; no gravity, no extension?—A Spirit must be either *something* or *nothing*. If nothing, it is a non-entity, a delirium of the imagination.—Something is the opposite of nothing.—If a Spirit, therefore, be *something*, it must be a *reality, an essence, a being, a substance, an existence*; and Divines grant this, for they say that the three persons of the Godhead are the *same in substance*:—but these predicates seem necessarily to imply *matter*. For what is

existence without *body*, *substance* without *matter*, *intelligence* without *sensations*, and *life* without *organs*. Here Mr. B.'s assertion appears problematical, and Faith must supersede Reason.—I could draw many other consequences from the mysteries of our faith to corroborate what I have advanced. For instance, Adam and Eve, in eating the forbidden fruit, committed the greatest possible sin, or next to the greatest: for they not only made themselves liable to eternal damnation, but brought all their posterity into the same predicament; and the greatest part of mankind are doomed to eternal misery, for the consequences of the fall reach to every individual of the human race; the Redemption by Christ is only partial, being limited to the Elect, or, if you will, to those who by faith accept it; and yet Divines tell us, that Adam and Eve, though the first and greatest of sinners, are both in Heaven.—As a contrast to this, JUDAS is in HELL, because he was the principal agent in bringing about the crucifixion of Christ, though this crucifixion was *absolutely necessary* for the salvation of mankind, because, without shedding of blood (says the Apostle Paul) there is no remission, and though it was the most important and beneficial event that ever took place, or can take place, in the world. How the necessary agent in bringing about this event of such transcendent benefit and importance (for there behoved to be *some agent*) should have the fate which reason would appropriately assign to those who were the instruments of introducing universal woe into the world, far transcends the limits of the human mind!—But, here again faith triumphs. The Scripture saith “We walk by faith, not by sight;” and “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.”—On this account I applaud the sentiments of a modern preacher, of rising celebrity, who, in a recent publication, says—“It behoves us to make an *entire* and *unconditional* surrender of our minds, to all the duty, and to all the information which the Bible sets before us. Let the principle of “What thinkest thou” be exploded, and that of “What readest thou” be substituted in its place. Not the *reason of the thing*, but the authority of the Bible is the standard of orthodoxy. We must form our divinity not

by *independent thinking*, but receive it by *obedient reading*. The Bible will allow of no compromise; it claims a *total ascendancy* over the *souls* and *understandings* of men.” Had your late correspondent, Mr. Fordham, adverted to this doctrine, he would not have denied the existence of the DEVIL. He said, that the Devil was merely a *personification* of evil. The Bible says the contrary. Jesus Christ came into the world for the express purpose of destroying the *works* of the Devil. Was it a mere personification that *tempted* Eve? Is it merely a personification that goes about as a *roaring lion* seeking whom he may *devour*? The Apostle James says, “the Devils believe and *tremble*.” Can personifications tremble?—You, Sir, like a true churchman, contended strenuously for the existence of the Devil, and justly maintained that a denial of the Devil's existence was entirely subversive of the Christian system; so that he is, in a manner, as you observed, the *sheet-anchor* of Christianity, and the *kernel* of the *creed*.—I hope Mr. Fordham and Mr. B. if they ever again correspond with you, will learn to put a suitable curb on the wanderings of their reason, and pay due deference to the plain letter of the Bible. The poet, Pope, says, “we reason but to err.” This is a just remark. I am, therefore, diffident of my own reasoning; but I am no dogmatist. I, therefore, expect indulgence to the candour of my sentiments. With the preacher before mentioned, I am of opinion, “that if we felt it our business to submit to the oracles of God, and not think ourselves called upon to effect a reconciliation between a revealed doctrine of the Bible, and an assumed or excogitated principle of our own; could we get faith to be reduced to be a mere question as to the language of the Bible, we might look at no distant period for the establishment of a *pure* and *unanimous* Christianity in the world.”—Let Mr. B. Mr. Fordham, and other Unitarians think of this. But, in the meantime, till this happy æra arrives, let us not persecute; let us be tolerant, be liberal, and have the sentiments and conduct of honourable men and candid scholars; for, after all, of what avail are our opinions, if they be not associated with civility, but tinctured with barbarism!

J. W.

APOLOGIES OF MILTON AND SHAK-
SPEAR.

"From the sublime to the ridiculous there is only one step."

BONAPARTE.

I plead guilty to Mr. Cobbett's charge. He has rightly observed in one of his Registers, that the human mind cannot attempt to form an adequate idea of the Supreme Being, without feeling a degree of awe and fear almost beyond its power to sustain. These are not his words, but such is his thought, and it is mine. When I wrote *Paradise Lost* I was blind in body; that affliction ought to have warned me not to direct my mental eye into the heaven of heavens. I erred from the sublime to the ridiculous; I saw my error; I chose a fitter theme, and described a mightier victory than any I had sung before. It was the victory of the "Son of Man," or every temptation from within and from without to do that which is evil. *Paradise Regained* is my best poem. God exists; evil is permitted. Why does he permit it? Keep his commandments and the truth will be revealed to you; or your own powerful mind will attain to it.

JOHN MILTON.

II.

I plead guilty to Mr. Cobbett's charge. But pray, Master William Cobbett, why so hard upon one who, like you, is a self-taught writer, and had only his mother-wit and honest heart to guide him. Like you, I was a bold spirited lad; I know not whether you went so far as to break into a magistrate's park, kill his deer, and make love to his keeper's daughter. For these, and other pranks, to avoid being sent to jail, for telling bold truths in a rough way, I run my country, and tried my luck in London. My fancy led me to the play; the calling of a player was one that I liked; my countrified looks and Warwickshire dialect were not liked; they sent me to hold horses at the play-house door. I was not daunted. I wrote ballads now and then, and, as Ariel says, in doing Prospero's bedding, I did my spiriting gently. The players liked me, but I was too bashful to shine on the stage, so I took to writing as you have done. I never called myself a Poet. Ben Johnson, with his Greek-encumbered head, says, that poet, in the original, means

creator. If so, it is a blasphemous title. I created nothing. I invented nothing. They told me to hold the mirror up to nature. I tried to do so. I drew nature as I had seen her on the Avon and in Arden; I drew men as I saw them daily, wise men and fools, lovers and men-haters, maids and wives, knaves and knights, traitors and heroes. I drew madmen also. As to what you say about sorcery, magic, and smut, the former were the superstition of the age, and I was fool enough partly to believe them. As to smut, I was downright too bad; set it down to my plain dealing; for, like you, I like to call a spade, a spade; and a rogue, a rogue.—As to what they call my poetry, it was purely accidental. Like you, I wrote honestly off-hand and what my head and heart dictated at the time. Lord Surrey, before my time, had introduced blank verse; I liked it, and wrote it. My heart even led me to think that virtue and vice, often in human life, meet with their own deserts; but sometimes they do not, and therefore there is another. I was always a Christian. Having earned what would keep me the rest of my days, I left London, as you did, and retired to my native place, where my bones are laid, and no man has removed them. As to my Plays, I cared no more about them than you do about your Registers: they answered my turn, and, in truth, I was too much ashamed of most of them to make any stir about them.—Let me give you some counsel. You are an honest Englishman and a plain dealer. You are strictly just; but learn to love mercy. When you flog a justice do it moderately; think that a justice may be hot blooded, like you, and not enough inclined to wrest the law to his authority, and for a great right to do a little wrong. Set him the example. Ben Johnson has called me the *gentle* Shakspeare; he knows I little deserved the name, for even he used to say I was too hasty, both in speaking and writing. *Sufflaminandus erat*, says he, with his usual fondness for those damned out-landish six-foot words (*sesquipedalia verba*).—Now, be a little more gentle. Even Dr. Parr should be mercifully dealt with. He has a kind heart, and some good thoughts in his head, if the Greek within, and the wig and tobacco-smoke without, would let them forth freely. More of these jokes when I

see you, which I trust I shall do after you have grown old and full of days. Farewell, dear name sake. Yours, in good fellowship,

WILL. SHAKSPEAR.

As you meddle with us players, tell Kean when he acts Richard, not to tear his throat and his passion to tatters; tell him too, if he will drink, to forswear that thin potation called gin, and addict himself to sack; he will then live cleanly as a gentleman should.

PUBLIC INCOME.—PUBLIC EXPENDITURE, &c.

MR. COBBETT,—Perhaps I must plead guilty to the charge you have brought against me of “groping in the dark;” and, physician like, “wishing to feel my patient’s pulse before I prescribe a remedy.” And, I well acknowledge the truth and justice of your opinions on the subject, as well as heartily subscribe to the sound good sense of your idea, that “there is no occasion for ‘beating about the bush’ upon subjects of such vast importance, and that they cannot be too soon or too plainly laid open to public view.” But, it were as safe to preach Socinianism at the Court of Ferdinand, the well beloved, as to broach the idea of the Property Tax being either likely or proper to become a permanent branch of revenue, in a public print. I was obliged even to think of it with diffidence, write about it with caution, and make the attempt to publish it with fear and trembling. Your candour and willingness to hear both sides of the question, will overcome these impediments; and I shall proceed, in a subsequent communication, to give my

reasons for believing the following assertion to be founded in fact:—*That in the present mode of taxation is to be found, the actually impoverished state of the community; and, that in the first instance, a partial, and, finally a total repeal of the Assessed, Custom, and Excise Taxes, and an adoption of the Property Tax on an enlarged scale, would not only remove all our present inconveniencies, but yield a general benefit and afford permanent relief.* Here, then, Sir, is stated my object. Its justice and propriety I am prepared to defend, as I shall in an early communication endeavour to prove. In the mean time, Sir, I simply state my scheme. I beg to recommend it in outline for your consideration, and that of your readers, and most especially of Mr. Royle. I am well aware it will alarm some of them. All I have to request of those alarmed is, that they hear before they denounce, and judge before they condemn me, as well as *reflect* before they *write* on the subject; also, that they will bear in mind that, of the *sixty-seven millions* produced this year, *six and a half or seven* will come from Stamps, and *fourteen or fifteen* from the Property Tax; thus collecting *twenty-one or twenty-two millions*, at an expence of *less than five hundred thousand pounds*, or *one forty-second* part of its produce; while, the remaining *forty-four, or forty-five millions*, will cost *four millions*, or *one eleventh* part of the produce.—A wish to pursue the subject with accuracy and attention to history and fact, must plead an excuse for my delay of a display of it in a more detailed state. I am, &c.

A POLITICAL ECONOMIST.

November 20, 1815.